Week 15: Farewell

Overview

- Tips on writing a phonology paper
- Where can you go from here?
- Party on Friday the 15th

Tips on Papers

See attached McCarthy handouts. I’ll add one point: *Interleave* the presentation of the data and the analysis.

**BAD PAPER**

Here are some Palauan nouns:

```plaintext
data data data data
data data data data
data data data data
data data data data
data data data data
data data data data
data data data data
data data data data
```

My analysis uses the following constraints

```plaintext
constraint
constraint
constraint
constraint
constraint
constraint
```

As the following tableau shows, the analysis works:

```
gigantic tableau
```
GOOD PAPER

Some Palauan vowels become schwa when unstressed:

\[
\begin{align*}
data & \text{ data} \\
data & \text{ data}
\end{align*}
\]

I attribute this to the following constraint:

\[
\text{constraint} \quad \text{definition}
\]

Constraint X reduces vowels to schwa because it outranks Constraints Y and Z, as shown in the following tableau:

\[
\text{small tableau}
\]

Discussion of tableau

Some Palauan vowels, however, delete when unstressed:

\[
\begin{align*}
data & \text{ data} \\
data & \text{ data}
\end{align*}
\]

And so on until you have presented and analyzed all the interesting aspects of the data.
(Then, of course, you will discuss the interesting implications of your data.)

How you can make theoretical proposals/arguments in your term paper

If this is your first course in phonology, you haven’t been exposed to a huge range of theoretical proposals yet, so it might be hard to get a sense of what’s a reasonable proposal, or which areas of theory are good candidates for revision. If you’re feeling that way, here are some suggestions:

General

- **feature geometry**: Do your data argue for new/different groupings? Consonant-vowel interactions are fertile ground for new feature-geometric proposals

- **underspecification**: Do your data support contrastive underspecification? radical underspecification? Something else?

- **locality**: do your data support the idea of locality at the segment level? At the tier level? At the “next-node-up” level? Something else?

- **rules vs. constraints**: Have you found a conspiracy? A case of emergence of the unmarked?
• **the constraint set:** Do your data force you to propose a new markedness constraint? A new form of faithfulness?

• **relationships among constraints:** Did you find evidence for a harmonic ordering? For inherent rankings? If there was variability in your data, did you find a consistent difference between careful speech and rapid speech?

• **factorial typology:** If you’re looking at some phenomenon cross-linguistically, is the factorial typology fully filled in? Did you find gaps?

• **OT architecture:** do your data require tied constraints? Variably ranked constraints? Did you find a striking case of strict domination?

• **problems in OT:** Did you find a nice way to analyze an opaque phenomenon?

**For acquisition papers**
- Did child language differ from adult language in the formulation of the constraints? In their ranking?
- If you have longitudinal data, how did the child’s grammar change (re-ranking of constraints? restructuring of URs?)

**For computational papers**
- Do you find that making certain assumptions (about OT architecture, feature geometry, underspecification, privative vs. equipollent features, particular constraints, etc.) makes things more/less computable?

**For experimental papers**
- Did you find that some phenomenon was unproductive? What changes does that require to the grammar?
- If speakers were able to extend some pattern to new words, was their behavior uniform? How did they treat nonsense words that were very different from real words? What does this require you to say about their grammar? How could the grammar have gotten that way?

**For historical papers**
- How does the historical change compare to synchronic alternations in other languages? Did the change involve re-ranking of constraints? Restructuring of underlying forms?

**For OT reanalyses of phenomena previously analyzed in rule-based terms** *(same goes for nonlinear reanalyses of phenomena previously analyzed in linear terms)*
- Does your reanalysis solve any problems in the original (problems acknowledged by the author or problems you see)? Does your reanalysis introduce new problems that weren’t an issue in the original?
Where can you go from here?

- **531B**: Phonology II with Rachel Walker, W 12:30-3:00
- **580**: Phonetics with Dani Byrd, TTh 11-12:30
- **599**: Computation in OT with Kie Zuraw, W 3:15-5:45
- *PhonLunch*: Weekly informal meeting of phoneticians and phonologists. Schedule is at [http://www-scf.usc.edu/~nhacopia/phonlunch.htm](http://www-scf.usc.edu/~nhacopia/phonlunch.htm)
- *Department colloquia*: About one Tuesday per month. Schedule is at [http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/linguistics/colloq.htm](http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/linguistics/colloq.htm)
- *WCCFL*: Big formal linguistics conference, hosted by USC this year! Invited speakers Alan Prince (as in Prince and Smolensky, the original OT manuscript) and Alec Marantz. February 23-25th. Program will be posted at [http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/linguistics/wccfl/](http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/linguistics/wccfl/)
- *SWOT*: Regional phonology workshop, to be hosted by USC! April 21-22. Rachel and I will circulate more information later.
- *Join the Linguist List*: [http://www.linguistlist.org/](http://www.linguistlist.org/) This is a high-volume email list, though, and you can read it on the web page instead.
- *Join the Optimal List*: This is a low-volume email list about just phonology and OT. It is not available on the web. Go to [http://ruccs.rutgers.edu/ROA/o-list.html](http://ruccs.rutgers.edu/ROA/o-list.html) to subscribe.

**Party on Friday the 15th**

*What*: Roumi and I are throwing a party for students in 531A (phonology) or 530 (syntax).

*When*: Friday, December 15th, starting at 7:30

*Where*: (location omitted for web)